



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

July 23, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents, Building Principals, Building Coordinators,
and MI-Access Coordinators

FROM: Andrew Middlestead, Director, Office of Standards and Assessment
Eleanor White, Director, Office of Special Education

SUBJECT: Alternate Assessment Based on Alternate Achievement Standards

As the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) transitions to a new generation of state level assessments, consideration has also been given to transition the MI-Access English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics alternate assessments. To this end, Michigan has been involved in the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) consortium and has been involved with the creation of the DLM Essential Elements and has actively participated in the development of the assessment and assessment items.

However, Michigan has concerns regarding some areas of the DLM that have not been resolved. Therefore, MDE has decided to delay participating in the DLM assessment until spring of 2016 at the earliest.

What does this mean for spring 2015?

The MI-Access assessments will be available in the spring of 2015 for students whose Individual Education Program (IEP) Team has determined that it is not appropriate for them to participate in the state's general education assessment. These Assessments will continue to be based on Michigan's Extended Grade Level Content Expectations, Extended Benchmarks and Extended High School Content Expectations. We are also in the process of determining the future of alternate achievement standards in Michigan (such as a transition to Essential Elements, which is one possibility).

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

JOHN C. AUSTIN – PRESIDENT • CASANDRA E. ULBRICH – VICE PRESIDENT
DANIEL VARNER – SECRETARY • RICHARD ZEILE – TREASURER
MICHELLE FECTEAU – NASBE DELEGATE • LUPE RAMOS-MONTIGNY
KATHLEEN N. STRAUS • EILEEN LAPPIN WEISER

608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
www.michigan.gov/mde • (517) 373-3324

What alternate assessment will be available in spring 2015?

MI-Access Functional Independence:

- Mathematics grades 3-8 and 11
- Accessing Print grades 3-8 and 11
- Expressing Ideas grades 3, 6 and 11
- Science grades 4, 7 and 11
- Social Studies grades 5, 8 and 11 (tentative)

MI-Access Supported Independence and Participation:

- ELA grades 3-8 and 11
- Mathematics grades 3-8 and 11
- Science grades 4, 7 and 11
- Social Studies continues to be a district determined assessment

Implementation of DLM

There are issues that we are working with the DLM consortium related to the test in spring of 2015. These issues surround what we believe to be a quality assessment tool that addresses the needs of all students.

Some of the issues include, but are not limited to:

- DLM covering the full scope of the student population currently assessed using the AA-AAS (Alternate Assessment based on Alternate Achievement Standards) in Michigan;
- psychometric model used and how it fits into Michigan's accountability system; and
- ensuring accessibility to all students with disabilities.

Michigan has a history of providing quality alternate assessments that enable all students to participate in the state assessment program. As we transition to a new generation of assessments in Michigan, we want to ensure that the alternate assessment program used with your students is of the same quality, or better than what they have received, and that it continues to allow all students to participate in the state assessment process.